

MINUTES

IEEE Robotics and Automation Society Administrative Committee (AdCom) Meeting

Tuesday, 09 January 2024

Chalet RoyAlp Hôtel & Spa - Switzerland

Salon Dents Du Midi

9am - 12:30pm

1. Meeting Called to Order, and Welcome (K Mombaur)

2. Roll Call and Review of Consent Agenda (K Mombaur)

Attendees:

- **13 Elected Members (Voting Members)**

Class of 2024: Greg Dudek (online), Koh Hosoda (online), Barbara Mazzolai (online), Tetsuya Ogata (online)

Class of 2025: Alin Albu-Schaeffer, Yasuhisa Hirata (online), Lydia Kavraki, Eiichi Yoshida

Class of 2026: Arash Ajoudani, Allison Okamura, Karinne Ramierz-Amaro (online), Inna Sharf, Kenji Suzuki (online)

Not Attending: Fumihito Arai, Sabine Hauert, Hong Zhang, Marcia O'Malley, Yu Sun

- **3 Society Officers (Voting Members):** Aude Billard, Frank Park, Enrica Tricomi

Not Attending: Patrick Wensing, Tony Maciejewski, Nancy Amato

- **7 Non Voting Members:** Jen Jen Chung, Chad Jenkins, Darwin Caldwell, Jing Xiao, Katja Mombaur, Kyujin Cho, Bram Vanderborght

Not Attending: Andra Keay

- **RAS Staff and Guests:** Adrien Escande (online), Terence Martinez, Amy Reeder, Paul Goldberg, Patrick Hanna, Grace Zhao, Nicholas Milton (online)

3. Approval of Agenda (Including Consent Agenda and Standing Orders) (K Mombaur)

Including 3 Financial Motions:

- EAB: Robotics History Project Motion
- MAB: Student Activities Committee Travel Support Motion
- Ad Hoc on Sustainability Motion

AdCom Approved

4. Welcome and Agenda Details (A Billard)

Introduction and welcome of New AdCom members

Full Agenda available at <http://agd.ieee.org/mpt/Agenda.aspx?eid=18562>

5. Overview of Financial Motions (J Xiao)

FAB approved motions via the Consent Agenda

- \$100K for Robotics History Project;
- \$25K for ad hoc committee on sustainability;
- \$45K to support SAC Chairs/Co-Chairs travel to ICRA/IROS/CASE

1 additional Motion for AdCom to approve

MOTION: MAB requests USD \$100K to support developing country faculty and at risk scholars for 2024 and 2025

Motivation: to increase participation of members in developing countries in RAS conferences and activities and assistance to members of countries at risk
This is a renewal/extension motion.

Motion Passes - AdCom Approved

5 minute - break for AdCom to review IROS Memorandum of Understanding - Adoption

6. IROS Memorandum of Understanding - Adoption (A Billard)

Shared file: *IROS Charter - 19 December 2023* [see agenda] - this is an addendum to IROS MOU which is in discussion with IROS Steering Committee

IROS MOU Status Slides - presented by Frank Park

- IROS is sponsored by 4 societies: RSJ (25%) IEEE RAS (25%), IEEE IES (25%), SICE (25%) - current MOU
- Sponsorship share for RAS is not reflective of the contribution RAS makes to the conference; 2022 discussions initiated to adjust the relative sponsorship shares between RAS and IES
- The IEEE Conflict Resolution Committee ruled that the shares would change to RAS 35% and IES 15%. The split would be in effect for 2 years and further adjusted based on data collected based on member participation at the conference and journal submissions.
- Parallel to the decision, the IROS Steering Committee selected Abu Dhabi for IROS 2024 (decision made in 2019). Concerns were raised in 2022 about the UAE's compliance with IEEE DEI principles. RAS AdCom agreed on a greater voice in major decisions involving IROS. Discussions were initiated in the latter half of 2023 to revise the IROS Steering Committee Charter.
- Current IROS Charter
 - a. Composition 60+ members
 - b. All major decisions overseen by IROS SC
 - c. Executive Committee - consists of Presidents of 4 Sponsoring Societies. Acts as adjudication body.
 - d. Advisory Board advises IROS SC

- Revised IROS SC charter will be in effect for the 1/1/2024 - 12/31/2025
 - a. 3-tiered governance structure
 - i. Exec Committee - presidents of 4 sponsoring societies
 - ii. Steering committee - composition TBD
 - iii. Advisory Board: composition TBD
 - b. Major decisions require approval by the Executive Committee
 - i. Voting by Exec Committee is by $\frac{2}{3}$ majority
 - ii. Votes prorated via slide:
 1. RAS: 35 votes
 2. RSJ: 35 votes
 3. IES: 15 votes
 4. SICE: 15 votes
 - c. Nothing gets approved without approval from RSJ & RAS
- **Going forward:** IROS SC Chair requested that RAS sign MOU (ASAP) with the recognition that the revised charter will be completed by mid-March.

Discussion

Related side point: Dispute in the background is between RAS and IES. Conference proceedings over the years have made a significant amount of income.

Options considered: Either sign the MOU without a charter for now or compromise/conditional acceptance that in principle that we endorse the MOU if they have a minimum of our requirements (a list of our conditions)

Alternative - compromise - endorse MOU conditionally that we have Charter in place by January.

Significant discussion centered on potential conditions that could be considered.

MOTION: to sign IROS MOU unconditionally.

- 1 vote in favor
- Remainder Abstentions

Motion fails

MOTION: to sign MOU with conditions:

Motion Passes - AdCom Approved

Discussion

Further discussion centered on details of which conditions should be imposed.

Break

Discussion

Further discussion centered on details of which conditions should be imposed.

MOTION: To approve the IROS Memorandum of Understanding subject to the following conditions:

1. The revised IROS SC charter will be in effect for the period January 1, 2024 – December 31, 2025, with the following financial sponsorship shares: RAS 35%, RSJ 35%, IES 15%, SICE 15%.
2. A three-tiered governance structure will be established:
 - i. Executive Committee consisting of the presidents of the four sponsoring societies
 - ii. Steering Committee
 - iii. Advisory Board
3. All major decisions, including site selection and changes to the operations manual that are not of a minor nature, require approval by the Executive Committee.
 - i. Voting by the Executive Committee is by 2/3 majority.
 - ii. Votes by each sponsoring society president are pro-rated according to sponsorship percentage:
 1. RAS: 35 votes (35%)
 2. RSJ: 35 votes (35%)
 3. IES: 15 votes (15%)
 4. SICE: 15 votes (15%)
4. The IROS SC agrees to work with RAS within the calendar year 2024 on specifying policies for:
 - i. Composition of the IROS SC that entails geographical and gender diversity
 - ii. Guidelines on DEI and sustainability for conference site selection

Motion Passes - AdCom Approved

7. Break (not observed due to break during prior discussion)

8. New Business (K Mombaur)

Questions were raised regarding whether AdCom or various events (e.g., LwL, Queer in Robotics event, Cluster forums, etc.) would occur at IROS 2024 or ICRA@40 in fall.

There was a general agreement to do ExCom AdCom at ICRA 40th for easier access for everyone as we wish for everyone to be present. AdCom would be Sept 27th after the single track.

General discussion over which events will take place at which conference.

Conclusion:

WiE at both conferences

Most other events will happen at ICRA 40 and offer support guidance for IROS 2024. Financial support will be provided via AdCom approval in March 2024

Request to set AdCom meeting times for March and August. **Plan:** 4 AdCom meetings (3 virtual, 1 in-person, aligned with conferences) in person Jan, virtual March, in person May, in person September, maybe virtual Nov? Budget for Sept.

9. Meeting Adjourned (K Mombaur)

10. Next in person AdCom Meeting: 18 May 2024, Yokohama, Japan